



Key Points About Target Schools

Nothing bad happens to a Target school

Since this is the first year to look at schools using the federal standards, the Department is simply establishing a baseline. Target schools are schools that are below that baseline proficiency. The true measure of a school's performance will come in following years as the baseline is used to measure annual progress.

A Target school is not a failing school!

Target schools simply have not met the federal benchmark for the first year. The Department will offer technical assistance as necessary, but there are no sanctions. The intent is to make sure small issues don't grow into larger problems. Bottom line: What can we do to help teachers teach and children learn?

Keep the numbers in perspective

Under the No Child Left Behind law, 20% of all students will be classified as below proficient – that's by definition.

Many Target schools are excellent schools

No Child Left Behind requires that 95% of students enrolled in a school participate in the testing process. Several schools are targeted simply because they did not meet that benchmark.

A number of high schools did not meet the federal benchmarks because they did not have a 60% graduation rate. Under the federal requirements, the graduation rate calculation does not recognize "completers," students who earn a GED, special education diploma or certificate of attendance.

A number of schools did not meet the federal benchmark simply because of one area. For example, if a school's limited English proficient students did not meet proficiency in math, or if its Native American students did not have a 93% attendance in middle school, then the school did not meet the federal benchmark. This does not mean the whole school is failing, but it does help to identify where to focus attention and assistance.

There's a lot of good news!

Don't lose sight of the success stories in our schools. Sixty-three schools were upgraded off the state's high priority schools list. The Exemplary Educator program and other efforts have made a big difference this year.